DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 267 820 IR 051 481

AUTHOR Vink, C. M.
TITLE In-Service Training in South African Libraries. A Brief Review Based on a Thesis for the M.Bibl. Degree of the University of Pretoria.
PUB DATE 79
NOTE 10p.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Developing Nations; *Inservice Education; *Libraries; Library Cooperation; *Library Personnel; Library Research; *On the Job Training; Position Papers; Professional Development; *Staff Development
IDENTIFIERS *South Africa

ABSTRACT

A study was undertaken to ascertain the position of inservice training for librarians in South Africa and to determine what adjustments were necessary for inservice training practice in South African libraries. An examination of the literature on inservice training revealed current trends, and the literature in the field of library science was analyzed against this background. A questionnaire was then compiled and sent to 63 South African libraries to determine to what extent these libraries approached the ideal situation as portrayed in the literature. Replies were received from 50 libraries and were analyzed according to library type. A brief review of the full study, this document is divided into the following sections: (1) a general introduction, including a definition of inservice training; (2) aims of training including the provision of necessary knowledge, guidance of staff toward greater insight, improvement of skills and broadening of experience, and development of a positive attitude towards work; (3) who should be responsible for inservice training; (4) possible cooperative training efforts; (5) differentiation of training; (5) a brief review of training methods, including applications in South African libraries; and (6) a scenario of the ideal situation. (THC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED267820

In-service Training in South African Libraries

C.M. Vink

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OERI
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization onginating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Library Services
Dept. of National Education
Pretoria 1979

IR051481

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
C.M. Vink
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

IN

SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARIES

A BRIEF REVIEW BASED ON A THESIS FOR THE
M.BIBL. DEGREE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

C.M. VINK

Library Services
Department of National Education
Pretoria 1979

CONTENTS

	Page
GENERAL	1
AIMS	1
WHO MUST UNDERTAKE IN-SERVICE TRAINING?	2
CO-OPERATION	3
DIFFERENTIATION OF TRAINING	3
TRAINING METHODS	4
THE IDEAL SITUATION	5

1. GENERAL

For centuries informal training in the work situation has been the only method of training librarians. Such training by the employer cannot be replaced *in toto* by other methods, since only the employer can train librarians for specific tasks in a specific library. All employers should accept responsibility for the planned in-service training of their library staff.

A study was undertaken to ascertain the position of in-service training in South Africa and to determine what adjustments were necessary for in-service training practice in South African libraries (Vink, 1979).

An examination of the literature revealed what had been done in the field of in-service training and what the modern trends were. Against this background the literature in the field of Library Science was analysed, systematically arranged and evaluated. A questionnaire was compiled and sent to 63 South African libraries to determine to what extent these libraries approached the ideal situation as sketched in the literature and what was still lacking. Fifty replies were received and analysed according to type of library.

Notwithstanding its importance to library staff in-service training receives little attention in South Africa and this is borne out by answers to the questionnaire which clearly show that in many cases in-service training in libraries is unplanned and incidental. However, certain libraries and library services do, to some extent, give attention to in-service training.

1.1 What is in-service training?

In-service training is organised training whereby management creates opportunities for workers to become better equipped for present as well as future work.

2. AIMS

It is apparent from the literature that the purpose of all training should be clearly defined. If those responsible for training are aware of their aims and objects they are more likely to achieve the desired results. Clearly-defined aims are essential to the compilation of courses, the evaluation of training and the arrangement and organisation of such training if the desired results are to be obtained. It is necessary for every employer to formulate definite aims for the in-service training of staff so that any defects in the existing system may be determined. Efforts

must be made to -

(i) provide the necessary knowledge;

(ii) guide the staff towards greater insight;

(iii) improve skills and broaden experience; and

(iv) develop a positive attitude towards work.

From answers to the questionnaire it appears that 41 out of 50 libraries have not formulated the aims of their in-service training. Of the nine libraries which have formulated aims only six could describe these aims. Their descriptions, however, were very unsatisfactory. Six libraries realised the importance of increasing the knowledge of their staff and two libraries wanted to improve the attitude of their staff towards their work. Not a single library mentioned that its aims in training staff were to guide the workers towards greater insight, to improve their skills or to broaden their experience.

It would seem that very few South African libraries are aware of the aims of in-service training. Without well-formulated aims they have little chance of creating the ideal situation. It is therefore essential that South African libraries should formulate such aims and stress the need for knowledge, insight, skills, experience and correct attitudes if members of staff are to perform their tasks efficiently.

3. WHO SHOULD UNDERTAKE IN-SERVICE TRAINING?

Planned in-service training must be provided for all library staff. Management must accept responsibility for this. The parent organisation under which the library falls should accept responsibility for general training, such as training in management, training for supervisors and for training officers, while the library itself should be responsible for training in specialised library subjects. A committee, or, in the case of small libraries, an individual should be appointed to accept responsibility for planning all training. Libraries with staffs of 100 or more should (according to certain British standards) appoint a full-time employee as an in-service training officer. Smaller libraries should appoint a part-time worker to plan and co-ordinate such training. In decentralised library services Head Office must make provision for the in-service training of persons working in affiliated libraries and branch libraries, and for staff who are in any way connected with these libraries. The librarian, his deputy and heads of departments are all responsible for training, as well as every person in a supervisory position.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

About two-thirds of the libraries stated that in-service training was receiving attention, but only 40% of these libraries offer in-service training by way of courses. Parent organisations of less than 25% of these libraries offer training courses for library staff. In the case of only 12% of the libraries questioned, in-service training is offered by Head Office. In only half of the libraries concerned a committee is responsible for the planning of in-service training. Not one of the 10 libraries qualifying for a full-time in-service training officer employs such a person. Several members of library staffs present courses, but heads of departments are mainly responsible for training. Furthermore, chief librarians and their deputies are also involved in the presentation of courses.

4. CO-OPERATION

The employer need not assume sole responsibility for all training. By co-ordinating courses a saving in costs will be effected. Courses may also be presented by library associations, universities, or other libraries.

The South African Library Association should take the lead by establishing an institute for continuing education to co-ordinate the training offered by all professional associations and their branches, universities and various libraries, for instance national libraries. A function of this institute should be the training of training officers, the provision of training aids, and the organisation of short courses in specialised subjects. In South Africa the South African Library Association offers library staffs more opportunities for continuing their education than any other institution. According to the questionnaire 64% of the libraries involved in the survey make use of courses presented by universities and colleges, whilst staff from 22% of these libraries attend courses provided by other libraries.

Although there is some measure of co-operation between libraries and other institutions at present, proper co-ordination will contribute to even greater co-operation.

5. DIFFERENTIATION OF TRAINING?

In larger libraries provision has to be made for members of staff whose tasks are often widely differentiated, and therefore it is essential when training groups to vary course content according to stage of training, professional level and qualifications. Provision must be made for general as well as specialised training. Training must be provided for the newcomer, for those whose knowledge might be outdated, and also for the continuing education of all staff. This training must not only be provided orally, but also by way of written matter, such as duty sheets, procedure manuals and other

guides and handbooks. In larger libraries courses consisting of lectures can be presented. The training of in-service training officers must receive urgent attention since these persons will have to take the lead. Training for supervisors and librarians in managerial positions is also necessary. In-service training for staff with no training in Librarianship should receive earnest attention. Staff with qualifications in Library Science must also receive in-service training, since only the employer is in a position to offer in-service training to meet his own organisation's specific needs.

From the answers received it is apparent that South African libraries provide in-service training for various employees in a group context. Scant provision (14%) is made for the in-service training of training officers, but more attention is given to newcomers (44%). Only 22% of the libraries involved offer refresher courses for staff who wish to be up to date. The emphasis is on staff with no library training, but only 28% of these libraries offer courses in in-service training for untrained staff. Libraries pay more attention to the in-service training of leaders than their subordinates. In-service training methods requiring minimum preparation, e.g. informal discussions, rather than written matter or lectures, are used to train the newcomer.

Thus certain groups and various training needs can be identified, and it is essential that all these matters receive adequate attention.

6. TRAINING METHODS

The literature shows that where in-service training is undertaken the best training methods should be employed to achieve the desired results. Duty sheets are essential to determine the content of the in-service training programme. Informal as well as formal training could be presented.

Knowledge may be transmitted by means of informal discussions and advice, but use should also be made of written accounts or reports on the work. Subject literature may be read during working hours. Guides must be compiled for all libraries. Lectures, audio-visual aids, programmed instruction and correspondence courses can also be used.

To promote insight staff meetings should be held, visits paid to other libraries and research undertaken. Seminars, debates and discussions of case-studies should also be arranged.

To improve staff skills and broaden experience practical work can be undertaken during courses and role-playing be

encouraged. Rotation in jobs and internship will broaden the experience of individual members of staff.

A staf magazine containing social news could be started to improve the attitudes of staff. During courses there should be opportunities for social mixing, so that members of staff may become better acquainted and react positively.

6.1 Application in South African libraries

South African libraries employ a wide variety of methods for in-service training. Informal in-service training is fairly common, but little provision is made for formal in-service training. Only 52% of the libraries under discussion use duty sheets. Knowledge is usually imparted by means of discussions and talks, and the reading of relevant literature during working hours is often allowed. Only 76% of these libraries have manuals. In 54% of the libraries written reports are compiled. It is significant that the more formal training methods, namely by means of lectures, audio-visual aids, programmed instruction and instruction by correspondence are used less frequently than informal methods. Many different methods are used to promote insight: staff meetings are held (82%), visits are paid to other libraries (68%), research is undertaken (48%), etc. Few libraries make use of seminars, debates and case-studies.

Employers train staff to perform various tasks in the work situation but in most of the libraries researched such training is not organised. Insufficient attention is paid to methods enabling staff to broaden their experience, such as practical work during courses, role-playing, rotation in jobs and internship.

It is difficult to determine to what extent a positive attitude to work is created in the South African libraries involved in the survey. There is no doubt, however, that a spirit of hearty co-operation can be established if persons are drawn into the main stream of library activities, for example, during courses and by means of discussions and meetings. Most libraries seem to have neglected this aspect. At present 34% of the libraries concerned have a staff magazine.

Although South African libraries already make use of a wide variety of training methods, these methods should be selected in such a manner that training objectives are achieved.

7. THE IDEAL SITUATION

Training of library staff in South Africa is at present undertaken by the various universities. During a student's training theoretical work is complemented by practical work, for example, practical cataloguing, classification and reference work. When the student has had adequate experience of putting his knowledge into practice in the class situation (under the supervision of the lecturer) he will be afforded an opportunity of working in various

libraries. This field-work should be undertaken in close co-operation with the lecturer. To have well-trained librarians the ideal is to provide a university course in which attention is given to theoretical work, practical work and field-work. Then the employer takes over. His share in the training of library staff should consist not only of unplanned informal in-service training in the work situation, but also planned in-service training where attention is given to theoretical as well as practical library work to complement that offered by the university. Employers emphasise their specific needs. It would appear that universities and employers do not always realise their individual responsibilities. Universities as well as employers are responsible for practical and theoretical work, and may emphasise different aspects of such work. The South African Library Association has in the past done a lot to promote training and is at present giving considerable attention to training by the universities. This Association should also take the lead in in-service training and see that it receives adequate attention.

SOURCE:

Vink, C.M. Indiensopleiding van biblioteekperscneel deur die werkgewer met spesiale verwysing na die indiensopleidings-praktyk en -beleid in Suid-Afrikaanse biblioteke. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria, Mei 1979. 218 p. M.Bibl.

(In-service training of library staff by the employer with special reference to in-service training practice and policy in South African libraries).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE